

Westlake Cycle Track Design Advisory Committee

Meeting #2 Summary

Monday, April 7, 2014 5:30-8:00 p.m.
MOHAI – Nordhoff Family Learning Center

Design Advisory Committee Member Attendees

Member Name	Interest Represented	Attendance
Warren Aakervik	Freight interests	Present
Martha Aldridge	Lake Union Park users	Present
Andrew Austin	Non-vehicular commuters	Absent
Devor Barton	Pedestrian interests	Present
Karen Braitmayer	Westlake Ave North business owners	Absent
Dave Chappelle	Lake Union floating home and live-aboard residents	Present
Thomas Goldstein	Cascade Bicycle Club	Present
Amalia Leighton	Transportation Engineer	Absent
Sarah McGray	Bicycle interests	Present
John Meyer	Air/water transportation/tourism	Present
Martin Nelson	Westlake Stakeholders Group*	Present
Peter Schrappen	Lake Union marina operators and boat moorage tenants	Present
Cam Strong	Westlake Stakeholders Group*	Present

**Note: The Westlake Stakeholders Group represents a variety of businesses and residents within the Westlake corridor.*

Staff attendees

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

- Barbara Lee
- Art Brochet
- Mike Estey
- Mary Rutherford
- Sam Woods

Mayor's Office

- Andrew Glass Hastings

EnviroIssues

- Penny Mabie
- David Gitlin
- Sara Colling

Toole Design Group

- Kristen Lohse
- Pete Lagerwey

Audience members

- Ann Bassetti
- Peter Carr
- Pamm Carr
- Sue Dills
- Jerry Dinndorf
- Brock Gilman
- Cathy Graubert
- Marilyn Perry
- Sierra Hansen
- Ingrid Rasch
- Jo Seel
- Arden Wilken
- Jack Wilken

Note: This document is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It is not intended to be a transcription of the meeting, but an overview of points raised and responses from SDOT and Design Advisory Committee (DAC) members.

Welcome and introductions

Penny Mabie, facilitator, welcomed the committee and audience members and led a round of introductions. She reminded the committee of the ground rules agreed upon at the first meeting:

- Start/end on time
- Silence cell phones
- Come prepared
- Listen respectfully
- Speak from interests, not positions
- Participate in the process

She reviewed the meeting agenda:

1. Adopt summary from Meeting #1 and review updated DAC charter and work plan
2. DAC members share feedback from the interests they represent
3. Discuss information compiled to date and how it informs design:
 - Existing Conditions and Design Criteria
 - Traffic Circulation
 - Parking Utilization
4. Review business and resident survey
5. Observer comments to DAC

Review of Meeting #1 summary, charter and work plan

Penny reviewed the revisions made to the Meeting #1 summary based on input and comments from DAC members. She drew the committee's attention to the note that it is summary rather than a transcription of the meeting. The purpose of the summary is to capture the intent of the comments rather than the exact words. The committee approved the revised meeting summary. SDOT will post the summary to the Westlake project website as final.

Penny pointed out the glossary included in the meeting agenda which includes terminology from the Bicycle Master Plan for three types of bicyclists: *interested but concerned*, *enthused and confident*, *strong and fearless*.

- Cam Strong, Westlake Stakeholders Group, noted that these definitions don't capture high-speed verses slow-speed bicyclists.
 - o Penny responded that the committee will discuss speed later on in the meeting, but the cycle track is designed to a certain speed that affects people's behavior regardless of their typical biking speed.

- Warren Aakervik, Freight interests, added that based on the last meeting, he thought the glossary would capture commuters versus family riders.
 - o Penny responded that those terms are not as clear cut as they seem. SDOT is using more fluid definitions.
 - o Barbara Lee, SDOT, added that defining a cyclist doesn't relate to how the cycle track will be used. This will be a slow-speed facility, but users who normally ride at high speeds would still use it.
 - o Sarah McGray, Bicycle interests, noted the cycle track will be designed to attract interested but concerned riders. Using these definitions doesn't predispose the design to one particular type of user.
- Cam asked about the glossary's definition of a cycle track and whether a cycle track entails physical barriers or simply pavement markings.
 - o Thomas Goldstein, Cascade Bicycle Club, said a cycle track entails a built barrier between cars and bicyclists.
 - o Cam noted it would be helpful to include the physical barrier as part of the definition.
 - o Sarah asked for clarification whether vehicles would be able to cross the lane at intersections.
 - o Thomas responded yes, vehicles would be able to cross. There are great design elements to accommodate safe crossings.
- Penny summarized that this will be a living glossary. The project team will add definitions of physical separation and pavement markers.
 - o Cam requested to also add the exception of intersections.
 - o Penny noted the reason for this glossary is for committee members to speak the same language. It is not for the public necessarily, it is just to make sure members are talking about the same thing.
 - o Devor Barton, Pedestrian Advisory Board, noted the committee should use the same terminology that is defined within the Bicycle Master Plan.
 - o Penny said the team would crosscheck these definitions within the Bicycle Master Plan and maintain this as a living glossary.

Penny reviewed the work plan and called attention to the future meeting dates.

- Cam asked if members need to notify the team in advance if they can't come to a meeting.
 - o Penny responded it's a courtesy and would be helpful to know, but not required.

Penny then reviewed the revisions to the draft charter, noting the addition of a problem statement:

The unique layout of the Westlake Avenue North corridor requires the growing number of people who ride bicycles through the corridor to choose among a busy pedestrian walkway, a busy adjacent parking lot, or the busy Westlake Avenue North road that is designated a Major Truck Street and serves transit. Because Westlake spaces for bicyclists and pedestrians are not

separated or delineated, behavior is less predictable and there are more opportunities for conflict.

Comments

- Peter Schrappen, Lake Union marina operators and boat moorage tenants, asked if Penny wrote the charter or if it is written in conjunction with SDOT.
 - o Penny responded that SDOT provides the content for all the DAC materials.
- Warren suggested including Dexter Avenue North as part of the problem statement because Dexter should be considered as part of the Westlake corridor.
 - o Barbara responded that SDOT was trying to identify what exactly the problem was which is high need for a safe facility.
 - o Warren noted part of the high need is included with Dexter as the major bicycle facility.
 - o Thomas responded that the members need to consider scope. They are here to talk about Westlake.
 - o Martha Aldridge, Lake Union Park users, said that while she agrees with Thomas that although everything is related, this group needs to focus their efforts.
 - o Sarah agreed that the DAC is here to meet the needs of bicyclists who use the Westlake corridor currently and in the future.
 - o Art Brochet, SDOT, clarified the project uses the term “Westlake corridor” to encompass the right-of-way which includes Westlake Avenue North as well as the parking lot and sidewalks.
 - o Warren responded that he accepts the statement as it is currently.
- Peter requested adding to the problem statement a statement about balancing the needs of marine-related businesses and residents.
 - o Members discussed briefly whether this was considered a problem or solution.
 - Penny said they will bring the notion of adding balance between all modes, users and businesses and residents to SDOT to consider.
- Penny reviewed the revision to add public comment to the charter. She noted that public comment is not a question and answer session. The purpose is for the meeting observers to share their comments with the DAC, and DAC members and SDOT staff will listen.
 - o Martin Nelson, Westlake Stakeholders Group, asked if audience comments would be part of the meeting summary.
 - Penny responded that yes, comments will be summarized.
 - o Penny noted depending on time, they may not get to every audience member.
 - Martin suggested that the DAC members don’t have to stay and listen to all public comments, but staff should stay and listen to all who want to comment.
 - Penny responded the purpose of the public comment is for audience members to address the DAC members, not the project staff.
 - Martin noted that was a good point.
 - o Cam asked if audience members could provide written comments.

- Penny responded yes, written comments are always welcomed and anyone can submit comments to the project email as well.
- Dave Chappelle, Lake Union floating home and live-aboard residents, asked if DAC members would have access to those emails.
- Penny responded that comments addressed to the DAC will be compiled and shared with the DAC.
- Penny asked if the committee considered the charter final after these considerations to the problem statement and the committee agreed.

DAC members share feedback from the interests they represent

Penny asked committee members to share the input they've been receiving from their constituents.

- John Meyer, Air/water transportation/tourism, reported concerns with access to parking for people who need to drive.
- Peter reported that he recently attended a related conference where he shared plans for the Westlake Cycle Track. Conference attendees hadn't heard of the project and he got the chance to explain the project to them.
- Thomas said he spoke at an event and there were a number of people interested in using the corridor. He also noted that Children's Hospital is leading the way for bike commuting and bike access.
- Dave said he met with the Floating Homes Association and talked with his neighbors. Their resounding concern is with the health and vitality of businesses along Westlake.
- Warren said their next Freight Advisory Board meeting is coming up and he will report back to the DAC next time.
- Cam reported he has received many emails and phone calls asking for updates as well as written comments on the Toole reports. He will share people's comments throughout the meeting.
- Devor Barton, Pedestrian interests, reported he hears about the importance of safety and access to transit.
- Martin reported people are concerned about the cycle track threatening the viability of marine-related businesses. The businesses are place-bound and cannot move away from the water.
- Sarah reported there is interest among bicyclists within major employers in South Lake Union to organize. They are considering setting up an open house soon. Another comment she hears is directionality – bicyclists don't understand where they need to be biking on Westlake.
- Martha reported she is hearing concern that many visitors to South Lake Union Park and its surrounding facilities come by car and need parking. Additionally she is getting enthusiastic response about what the cycle track can do to enliven the park.

Penny thanked the DAC members for their good work in listening to their constituents.

Presentations on information compiled to date and how it informs design

Penny informed the committee they would have a chance to discuss and ask questions at the end of each section.

Presentation: Existing Conditions and Design Criteria

Barbara introduced the presentation with SDOT's vision to create a vibrant Seattle with connected people, places, and products. She outlined the City's Complete Streets ordinance and how seven City of Seattle planning documents relate to the Westlake Cycle Track project.

Pete Lagerwey, Toole Design Group, began the Existing Conditions section of the presentation by explaining the purpose of the study was to inform cycle track design. The study covers the existing conditions of the Westlake corridor and establishes design criteria.

Kristen Lohse, Toole Design Group, then walked the committee through the characteristics of the Westlake corridor. She noted the range of widths within the right-of-way.

- Martin questioned whether the roadway is actually 60 feet wide.
- Kristen responded yes, the street is 60 feet wide in one place, but the right-of-way is 150 feet wide.

Kristen noted the parking lot uses including delivery and loading and garbage collection. She also noted the corridor's other uses including public space, landscaping and myriad utilities.

Pete Lagerwey then introduced the Design Criteria section of the presentation by explaining that the criteria Toole and SDOT developed for the Westlake Cycle Track are based both on the latest thinking in Seattle as well as nationally and internationally, in addition to the Westlake corridor-specific characteristics.

- He outlined that the cycle track will be two-way to minimize the space it occupies.
- The minimum width of the cycle track will be 10 feet and 12 feet is preferred. This cycle track is being designed for all users so the width needs to accommodate trailers behind bikes for children and needs to provide enough room for bicyclists to be able to pass each other. He noted the cycle track width can vary along the route.
- Pete Lagerwey then noted the cycle track design speed will be 10 miles per hour. There are many ways to design for reducing speeds such as visual friction (i.e. landscaping), pavement texture, symbols and signs.

Kristen then outlined the potential treatments for driveways and crossings including traffic control, signs and pavements markings. She showed potential options for designs that would maximize parking as well as access to businesses and boat moorages.

Questions

- Martin clarified that Toole Design Group was hired by the City to design the cycle track.
 - o Pete Lagerwey answered yes; Toole was hired for alignments and design.
- Martin asked about using curves, etc. to regulate speed in various ways throughout the corridor.
 - o Pete Lagerwey clarified they wouldn't use artificially designed curves to regulate speed. The changes in design throughout the corridor would depend on driveways, utilities and other elements.
- Martin asked what Toole's plan is to manage garbage collection, noting the properties on Westlake are overwater and given the Shorelines Management Act, space is limited for things like dumpsters.
 - o Kristen responded they haven't gotten there yet, and they welcome the DAC's input and ideas for how to manage garbage collection.
- John inquired about the expected volume of bicyclists, noting people will need opportunity to turn left and limiting driveway cuts would result in more people trying to get in and out at the same places.
 - o Kristen responded they will discuss traffic circulation and will need input from the DAC.
 - o Penny reminded the committee that the purpose for this meeting is just to identify problems rather than solutions.
- Thomas commented that 10 feet as a minimum width is narrow for a cycle track. Based on other city's reporting on their experiences, the width should be 12 to 14 feet. He also referenced a photo within the presentation and asked if that type of parking (referencing trailer parking) is permissible.
 - o Kristen said they are researching whether that is permissible.
- Peter asked if fire zones were being considered.
 - o Kristen said fire and loading zones are included.
- Peter asked if SDOT is considering eliminating a number of driveways.
 - o Kristen said that discussion is premature.
- Cam asked if the decision has been made that car traffic would be one-way.
 - o Kristen responded a one-way configuration is just an option.
- Cam mentioned he had received numerous written comments from community members regarding the Toole Design Group reports. He offered to read them or share written copies with the advisory committee. Penny advised him to provide the comments to SDOT and to the committee members if they wanted them. He requested SDOT send him a response on the comments.
 - o Thomas noted it would make sense to get SDOT's responses on the comments as well.

Presentation: Traffic Circulation

Pete Lagerwey introduced the traffic circulation findings presentation, noting the purpose of the study was to learn how people are currently using the parking lot and sidewalk. The study had three main components: movements, counts, and physical conditions.

Kristen then outlined their methods. They collected data in September and October during varied times of day on three weekdays and one Saturday. In terms of findings, pedestrians had the highest use of all modes. There are multiple challenging “mixing zones” in which all modes share the same space. Toole identified Driveway 14, by Diamond Marina, as well as Highland Drive, by the AGC building as most challenging with people on bikes, people walking, and people driving sharing the same space.

Questions

- Martin asked if Toole had input from the community on when and how to perform these studies.
 - o Kristen responded they did not; they worked with SDOT to determine when and how to collect the data that would inform design, which is the typical process.
 - o Martin noted Westlake is a unique corridor.
- Peter asked if Toole studied how many bicyclists use Westlake businesses.
 - o Kristen said that the study was based on traffic flow and was not an origin/destination study.
 - o Sarah added that use of bike racks would be a practical way to measure.
 - o Peter agreed that would be useful data to have.
- Dave asked for more detail on how Toole chose the dates and time of year for data collection.
 - o Pete Lagerwey said they chose September for comparison purposes. September is ideal for comparison because it is not a peak time and not an off season. It is still boating season.
 - o Cam clarified that boating season ends on Labor Day, but yes, there are still boaters in the corridor then.
 - Kristen added that September reflects a typical season.
 - o Cam noted the seasonality of the corridor is unique. He also asked if they know where fuel deliveries are made. One 10,000 gallon fuel truck delivers regularly right where the trail ends by Diamond Marina.
 - o Warren noted that September had very nice days that would increase the number of pedestrians.
 - o Sarah added that nice days would also have more boat users.
 - o Warren asked about whether traffic counts on Westlake Ave N are also for September.
 - o Mary Rutherford, SDOT, responded that traffic counts are spread throughout the year.
 - o Sarah asked if Toole identified misuse areas, such as bicyclists jumping the curb.
 - Kristen said while it wasn’t specifically studied, they noted misuse behavior.

Presentation: Parking Utilization

Pete Lagerwey introduced the presentation outlining the purpose of studying parking utilization, which was to inventory parking supply, measure occupancy and collect parking data.

Kristen outlined their methods and findings, noting they collected data over nine visits to the corridor spanning different times of the day and week. They found that across all data collection times, City-

owned unpaid parking was 91% utilized. Paid parking was 50% utilized. The busiest zones run from McGraw Street south.

Questions

- Thomas asked if they studied regulated parking zones for live-aboards.
 - o Kristen said Westlake is already an RPZ zone, although that doesn't guarantee a spot.
- Dave noted that since September, parking activity has changed. Downtown and South Lake Union employees are using the parking all day.
 - o Pete Lagerwey asked if that they use both free and paid parking.
 - o Dave responded that paid parking isn't heavily enforced. Many vehicles don't have the RPZ sticker.
 - o Cam agreed with Dave. He noted within the parking management plan for Westlake, the northern side accommodates more residents which is why it didn't need paid parking.
- John asked how parking regulations would affect user behavior.
 - o Kristen said SDOT is drawing a distinction between parking design and parking management at this point.
 - o John noted that if parking regulations were changed now, SDOT and the DAC could see behavior results and design accordingly.
- Martin voiced concern in the validity of the parking study. He questioned whether it would be a conflict of interest to have Toole conduct the studies as well as design the cycle track.
 - o Pete Lagerwey responded that they didn't conduct the studies to figure out whether the cycle track should be approved. They conducted the studies to inform the design of the cycle track.
 - o Martin commented that if the parking study is going to have an impact on the corridor, the community should have input on when to conduct those studies.
 - o Devor commented that the City needs to conduct studies that are representational, rather than only collecting data that people ask for.
 - o Sarah asked that DAC members focus their comments on evidence that has been generated rather than anecdotal experience.
 - Pete Lagerwey noted they would likely get higher or lower numbers at different times of the year, but for design purposes they need to look at comparisons.
 - o Peter asked if September was randomly chosen as the month to collect data.
 - Pete Lagerwey said it was the best month for comparison purposes.
 - Penny asked whether collecting data in September was a matter of professional judgment, and Pete Lagerwey agreed.
- Cam requested that a study be conducted to reflect how things have changed since September.
 - o Thomas cautioned that the committee shouldn't enter a rabbit hole. Any aspect of this could take countless studies.
 - o Cam commented they need data that is relevant.

- Thomas responded the members were selected as experts to provide input on design options. Conducting more studies would stall the project unnecessarily.
- Sarah added that the scope of the studies was to take typical use scenarios. While quantities may increase or decrease, patterns are valid and informative.
- Martha agreed that these are a matter of comparison and from a cost-benefit perspective; she wouldn't want taxpayer money being spent on more studies.

Kristen briefly highlighted a few overall study conclusions including:

- Pedestrian use is highest of all modes
- Bikes travel the path of least resistance, following traffic patterns
- Driveway crossings need design consideration for all modes
- Even in high occupancy areas, there is some parking availability in paid public space and private lots
- Challenging mixing zones result when routes are not well defined

Penny summarized the discussion about the need for further studies noting this committee isn't deciding whether the project is going forward. At the next meeting the committee will see two potential alignments. Members should think about whether they have enough information based on these snapshots in time. If necessary, they can come back and revisit the need for further studies.

Presentation: Business and Resident Survey

Art presented findings from the business and resident survey conducted in March to collect information about corridor-use. He noted the high response rate, with approximately 400 responses compared to the roughly 350 postcards sent out announcing the survey. Approximately 60 percent of respondents were businesses, compared to about 30 percent were residents. The remainder of respondents classified as both businesses and residents.

Art mentioned that results still need more analysis but some of the key preliminary findings show that more respondents were located on the east than the west side of the corridor, business employees use a mix of free and paid city-owned parking in addition to private parking, and that most customer visits (about 70 percent) are less than two hours. The results showed that most activity occurs in the corridor on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Questions

- Peter asked what the purpose of the survey was.
 - Art said the purpose was to fill in some gaps that weren't reflected in the snapshot data such as loading requirements, when deliveries come, and how large the trucks are. It was also a way for Westlake residents and businesses to call attention to their specific needs.
 - Peter commented that it may have made more sense to conduct the survey before the project got underway.

- Martin asked if the survey was sent to all RPZ permit holders.
 - o Art responded the survey was sent to all businesses and residents the City of Seattle has an address for within the Westlake corridor. RPZ permit users should have been covered within that list.
 - o An audience member said they didn't receive the postcard.
 - o Art agreed it would have made sense to cross-reference the list.
 - o Cam noted he emailed the survey link out to the Westlake Stakeholders Group listserv so it had a broad reach.

Observer Comments to DAC

Penny addressed the audience letting them know she would have to limit public comment to eight minutes because of time constraints. She reminded the group the DAC would listen to but not respond to comments.

- Comment 1 – A floating home resident and biker rider was stunned the data only counted 411 bike trips per day which is not many compared to the expense and disruption this cycle track causes.
- Comment 2 – A property owner on Westlake commented when they applied for a permit from the City to build the marina, they were required to indentify one parking slip for every two moorage slips. Now that parking is changing, the marina won't be able to support that parking ratio.
- Comment 3 – Comment that safety was identified as most important value at the first meeting, but now SDOT seems to be encouraging more people into this corridor at the displacement of the people who are already there.
- Comment 4 – Comment that a critical piece of information that informs the committee's decision making is future conditions for the corridor, including rezoning for taller buildings.
- Comment 5 – Comment that at the Mayor's Neighborhood Summit last weekend, an individual spoke with SDOT staff who guaranteed the cycle track would be built even if it does damage to businesses. The staff member also said the cycle track can go anywhere within the 150-foot right-of-way. The commenter was concerned that this is the SDOT attitude Westlake stakeholders are facing.
- Comment 6 – Commenter noted that they haven't seen data about the economic impact of this project. The commenter comes in from Gig Harbor and keeps their boat on Westlake. He spends a lot of money in Seattle that would be lost.
- Comment 7 – A marina owner on Westlake commented she agrees with the previous comment. They have already lost 300 parking spots and their tenants would go out of business because they can't get a permit.

Next Steps

Penny outlined the next steps for the committee, noting at the next meeting SDOT and the design team will bring alignment options to the DAC for review. It will be an iterative/hands-on process. They will project maps for the audience to view as well.

- Sarah asked if SDOT parking management could be a part of the conversation now.
 - o Barbara responded that Mike Estey is in the audience to listen and the project team has been working closely with Mike. SDOT does feel there is a separation between parking design and parking management.
 - o Sarah said the data related to parking management is not relevant if the DAC is only considering parking design.
 - o Barbara responded SDOT's thinking was to address the topics sequentially. The number of spaces would define the parking management conversation. However, SDOT could consider integrating parking management sooner if the DAC thinks it's necessary.
 - o Thomas suggested it would be useful to hear from the Westlake Stakeholders Group what their suggestions are for parking management.
 - o Cam responded that was something he could do with a quick turnaround, but he sees it being more relevant after parking design is considered.
 - o Thomas note that he felt there was surplus parking and stakeholders could have good ideas for how to manage it wisely.
- Cam asked if the cycle track alignment options will include the Westlake Avenue North roadway.
 - o Barbara said the focus has been the parking lot but SDOT will ask for input along the roadway as well.

The Design Advisory Committee will meet next on Monday, April 21 from 5:30-8:00pm at MOHAI in the Nordcliffe Conference Room. The project team will email details and materials ahead of time.